



**CONTRA COSTA
WATER DISTRICT**

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July 26, 2010

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Delta Stewardship Council
650 Capitol Mall
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Chairman Isenberg and Council Members:

Contra Costa Water District commends the Delta Stewardship Council on the effort that is being put forth to create the Delta Plan and Interim Delta Plan. There are three major ways in which we believe the plan can be strengthened: adding early actions from the Delta Vision Strategic Plan, addressing water quality degradation, and improving technical accuracy. Each of these is described in more detail below.

1) Early Actions

The Delta Plan and Interim Plan must be about actions to improve the Delta. CALFED focused on process development and ultimately failed because of the lack of action to 'get better together'. The Delta Stewardship Council should not be CALFED 2.0; instead it should provide the much-needed leadership to begin and complete critical projects, especially those listed time and time again as 'near-term' or 'early' actions. To that end, the Interim Plan should include interim projects that were identified by the Delta Vision Strategic Plan and elsewhere in addition to those listed in SBX7-1. SBX7-1 supports this approach; as stated in line 37 of the Draft Interim Plan, "[t]he Council has the authority to make recommendations on early actions". In response to a specific request from Chairman Isenberg, we have provided a list of early actions that should be included in the Interim and Final Delta Plans. These projects are organized by policy objective and can be found in Attachment A. Most of these projects have been identified for years, but progress has been slow. We urge you to do everything in your power to ensure that these 'early actions' transition from concepts to implementation to make good on the commitment to the co-equal goals.

2) Water Quality

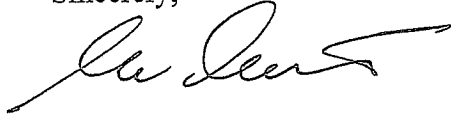
The current draft of the Interim Plan includes discussion of water quality as a contributing factor to ecosystem decline. Water quality is a critical issue to address in order to restore the ecosystem, as well as to ensure a reliable water supply. The Council and the Delta Plan should include actions that address the low quality (salinity and other pollutants) of drainage and wastewater into the Delta, including drainage from the San Joaquin River, and commit to actions that will improve water quality in the future. The Council and Plan should commit to ensuring the improvement of the quality of wastewater discharged into the Delta from all sources.

3) Technical Accuracy

For the Interim Delta Plan to be a credible roadmap, the background descriptions that are included must be accurate. There are a number of errors that should be rectified. For example, the current draft states that peak flows in the Delta occur during the summer. In fact, peak flows occur during winter and spring. Attachment B to this letter includes a list of technical corrections that we would like to see incorporated into the Interim Plan.

CCWD appreciates the opportunity to participate in the development of these important documents and we look forward to continuing to work together in the future. Please call me at (925) 688-8100 or Maureen Martin at (925) 688-8323 if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Greg Gartrell', written over a horizontal line.

Greg Gartrell
Assistant General Manager

GG/Martin:wec

Attachments

Attachment A
Suggested Early Action Projects

Plan Element	Name of Project	Responsible Agency	Status	Next Milestone	Milestone Due Date
Protect Delta cultural, recreational and agricultural values (B)	Sacramento Deep Water Ship Channel Project	USACE, Port of Sacramento			
	SF Bay to Stockton Deep Water Ship Channel Project	USACE, Port of Stockton, CCCWA	General Reevaluation Report is being prepared		
	Blacklock Restoration Project	DWR, SRCD, CADFG, USFWS, USBR	Levee was breached in 9/06	Monitoring / Adaptive Management	Ongoing Monitoring Through 2016
	Cache Slough Area Restoration	DWR, CA DFG	Planning / Baseline Studies	BDCP Draft EIR	Nov-10
	Calhoun cut/Lindsey Slough tidal Habitat restoration	DWR, CADFG, Solano Land Trust	Land Acquisition	BDCP Draft EIR	Nov-10
	Decker Island	CA DFG			
	Dutch Slough Tidal Marsh Restoration	DWR	EIR certified	Final Design & Permits	Jul-10
	Fish Screen Project at Sherman and Twitchell Islands	CA DFG	Design completion	Environmental Permits	Dec-11
	Franks Tract Project	DWR, USBR		Feasibility Study and EIR/EIS completion	2011
	Fremont landing Conservation Bank	CA DFG			
	Fremont Weir fish passage improvements			BDCP Draft EIR	Nov-10
	Fremont Weir modifications for seasonally inundated floodplain enhancement			BDCP Draft EIR	Nov-10
	Hill Slough tidal habitat restoration	CA DFG	Phase I & II complete	Phase III	

**Restore Delta
Ecosystem (C)**

Lisbon Weir fish passage enhancement					Nov-10	
Lower Mokelumne River Spawning Habitat Improvement Project	EBMUD					
McCormack-Williamson Tract/Grizzly slough	Nature Conservancy	Final EIR in progress		Final EIR	Jul-10	
Meins Landing	DWR CA DFG, USBR, SRCD, CALFED, NMFS	Stalled until agreement can be reached regarding utility pipelines		Implementation of new plans	2012	
Prospect Island tidal Habitat restoration	DWR					
Putah Creek fish passage enhancement				BDCP Draft EIR	Nov-10	
Rush Ranch tidal habitat restoration	Solano Land Trust					
South Delta Temporary Barriers Project	DWR, USBR, SDWA	Ongoing until replaced by permanent gates				
Suisun Marsh Habitat Management, Preservation and Restoration Plan	DWR, CA DFG, USBR, SRCD, CALFED, NMFS	Blacklock Restoration Construction Complete		Monitoring / Adaptive Management	Ongoing	
San Joaquin River Restoration Program	USBR, USFWS, NMFS, DWR, DFG	Interim flow releases began Oct 2009; Supplemental EA issued for WY 2011 Interim Flows		Draft Program EIS/EIR	delayed from June 2010	
Yolo Ranch tidal Habitat restoration	Westlands Water District/Metropolitan Water District			BDCP Draft EIR	Nov-10	

Promote statewide water conservation, efficiency, sustainable water use (D)	Appoint Delta Watermaster	SWRCB	In progress		Position will be filled by 2011
	Delta watershed diversion data collection and public reporting	SWRCB	In progress		Begins 2011
Improve the water conveyance system and expand statewide water storage (F)	2 Gates Fish Protection Demonstration Project	USBR, San Luis-Delta Mendota Water Authority	Draft FONSI Complete	Finalize Environmental Documentation	
	Bay Area Regional Desalination Project	EBMUD, CCWD, SCVWD, SFPUC, Zone 7	Pilot Project Complete	Interagency Institutional Agreement	2010
	Davis-Woodland Water Supply Project	Davis, Woodland, UC Davis			
	Delta Wetlands	Semitropic Water Storage District	Draft EIR complete	Public Comments	June 28th 2010
	Low-Flow Screened Intake to Clifton Court Forebay	DWR, MWD, CCWD, ACWD, Zone 7, SCVWD	Planning	Request for Proposals	Jun-10
	Freeport Regional Water Project	FRWA, USBR	Construction of intake completed in 2010	Water treatment plant construction	2012
	Los Vaqueros Reservoir Expansion	CCWD & USBR	EIR/EIS certified; Design in Progress		Construction to begin early 2011
	Stockton Deep Water Ship Channel Demonstration Dissolved Oxygen Project	DWR	In progress		

<p>Improve Water quality consistent with achieving water quality objectives in the Delta (E)</p>	<p>North Bay Aqueduct Alternative Intake Project</p>	<p>DWR, SCWA</p>	<p>DWR issued a Notice of Preparation on Dec. 2, 2009 to construct & operate an alternative intake on the Sacramento River</p>			
					18 months from start; start date depends on funding	
<p>Reduce risks to people, property and state interests in the Delta (G)</p>	<p>Contra Costa Canal Levee Elimination and Flood Mitigation Project</p>	<p>CCWD</p>	<p>Designed, Permitted, Needs Funding</p>		<p>Construction during summer 2010</p>	
	<p>Mayberry Farms Subsidence Reversal and Carbon Sequestration Project</p>	<p>DWR, RD 341</p>	<p>Designed</p>			
	<p>North Delta Flood Control & Ecosystem Restoration Project</p>	<p>DWR, USACE, RD2110, TNC</p>	<p>Final EIR nearly complete (summer 2010)</p>	<p>USACE EIS</p>	<p>2011</p>	
	<p>USGS Subsidence Research Project on Twitchell Island</p>	<p>DWR, USGS</p>	<p>Ongoing research through Sept - 2010</p>			
<p>Establish a new governance structure (H)</p>						

Attachment B
Suggested Technical Edits

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Water quality is likely one significant limiting factor in overall ecosystem health.

Comparatively low

~~27 levels of dissolved organic carbon in Delta waters may be a limiting factor on biological productivity~~
~~28 in certain areas. Agricultural drainage, wastewater discharge, tToxins, pollutants, and low dissolved~~
oxygen levels have all been found to damage

29 habitat quality for various aquatic organisms. Current salinity patterns may be enabling the survival
30 of non-native species that are not adapted to the Delta's formerly more variable seasonal salinity.
Salinity patterns in the south Delta have been altered sufficiently that at times there is a 'reverse' salinity
gradient between the Central Delta and San Joaquin River where it is saltier east of the Central Delta
towards than San Joaquin discharge than it is towards the westward ocean. This salinity gradient reversal
has the potential to confuse sea-ward migrating fish.

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20 Inflow patterns from the rivers have been sharply altered by the construction of large dams on most
21 of the tributaries and the associated water project operations.

The net effect of this change has

~~22 been to make the Delta more constant in its salinity levels across the seasons than in past eras.~~
Historically (pre-1920s) the Delta was typically fresh in all but the driest years. Prior to the 1850's the
Delta was not channelized and evidence shows that the Delta was largely fresh, even in extended
droughts, while in Suisun Bay salinities varied seasonally, with extended fresh periods every spring, even
in dry years. The changes in inflow patterns and channelization of the Delta have made the variation in
Delta salinity larger than it was prior to development and has changed Suisun Marsh and Suisun Bay from
a seasonally fresh-brackish environment to a seasonally brackish-salty environment. It

23 has also reduced the magnitude of channel-forming flood flows

28 Entrainment of large numbers of fish, eggs, larvae, and nutrients occurs in the south Delta intakes of
29 the SWP and CVP pumping plants, especially at peak pumping periods when
there are reverse flows

~~30 in Middle and Old Rivers in the south Delta. Pumping rates approach the level of tidal flow and the~~
net flow is substantially towards the pumps throughout the tidal cycle (i.e. there is no ebb tide moving
fish away from the pumps). Entrainment also occurs at other water diversion points

31 throughout the Delta, although to a lesser extent because of

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Changes in flows, aquatic habitat and water quality have led to regulatory requirements to protect

6 threatened and endangered species listed under the federal and state endangered species acts.

7 Biological opinions, court orders, species recovery plans, mitigation plans, and conservation plans all

8 seek to improve conditions for the fish and wildlife that depend on the Delta. The requirements

9 have restricted, among many things, both the quantity and timing of diversions by the SWP and CVP
southern Delta intakes,

10 especially when anadromous fish and estuarine fish are present near the intakes near the Old River

11 system of the San Joaquin River. ~~As the listed aquatic species continue to decline, the regulatory~~

~~12 requirements have continued to reduce the extent of operations for the SWP and CVP pumping~~

~~13 plants.~~

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6 ...In the 1960s, the Peripheral Canal was proposed,

7 but it ultimately was rejected by the voters of California in 1982. It should be noted that this project was
vastly larger than what is being shown as necessary today.

12 Prior to development of water resources facilities, anadromous fish were attracted upstream during
13 storm events from fall through the spring. The storm flows also provided pulse flows to move fish
14 downstream from the upper reaches of the streams and high flows to reduce salinity intrusion into
15 the Delta. Diversions for agriculture depleted spring and summer flows, especially in dry years.
Development of water storage and conveyance facilities further modified the flow patterns by
16 diminishing the peak flows in the winter and spring, while extending freshwater inflow throughout the
summer. Peak salinity levels shifted from the late summer (found in the 1920's prior to development of
major reservoirs) to late fall, as outflow substantially decreased in fall months, especially in the last 20
years. Annual freshening of Suisun Bay, which occurred for several months even in the driest years, no
longer occurs in dry and critically dry springs. Construction of levees
17 eliminated many wetland and shallow water zones where spawning and rearing of estuarine species
18 occurred. Levee maintenance programs also eliminated riparian vegetation that provided shade for
19 temperature control and protection from ultraviolet radiation. These changes affected anadromous .
20 fish species and Delta water quality patterns. Operation of the SWP and CVP pumping plants in the
21 Delta also changed flow patterns and water quality in the central and southern Delta.

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Add bullet for July 17, 2007 Speech: Governor Directs Immediate Actions to Preserve the Delta and Our Water Supply

The list of immediate actions included during that speech:

- Expand our invasive species control program
- Small Delta diversions must be screened
- Improving North Delta habitat that is important to smelt; specifically the Cache Slough Project.
- Proceeding with a Delta Emergency Response and Preparedness Plan
- Subsidence management in the Delta